



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LANSING

DON KOIVISTO
DIRECTOR

September 2, 2008

Dear Editor:

On August 27, 2008, the Traverse City Record-Eagle published an editorial titled "State's deer herd jeopardized" regarding Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The editorial stated: *"All this goes back to the Legislature's support of Department of Agriculture efforts to promote trophy hunting factories despite plenty of warning that they could lead to just such a disaster. The spread of chronic wasting disease has almost always been linked to private breeding and hunting facilities, just as this case appears to be."*

The statement is false and misleading. The Michigan Department of Agriculture is not, nor have we been in the past, promoting private cervid facilities. We have followed the law in doing our duty to regulate and monitor these facilities in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

In 2002, the Michigan Commission of Agriculture urged the Legislature to ban the importation of cervids into Michigan and pursue stronger regulations while the banning issue was being resolved. This was PRIOR to any cases of CWD in Michigan.

CWD has been identified in Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, and Canada and there are conflicting reports of the spread of CWD. Some blame private cervid operations, while others blame free ranging deer.

At a time when we are attempting to assess the extent of CWD, quarantine cervid operations, restrict certain hunting practices like baiting, and rapidly respond to this disease outbreak; it would be helpful if the media accurately reported the facts as the Record-Eagle usually does.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Koivisto".

Don Koivisto, Director
Michigan Department of Agriculture